

SELF-HARM PATIENTS IN GENERAL HOSPITAL: PREVALENCE OF MALADAPTIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS

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Introduction: Self-harm patients utilize many resources. This is especially so for those with underlying maladaptive personality traits, which, have not been examined locally.

Aim: To estimate the prevalence of maladaptive personality traits in self-harm patients.

Methodology: A 5-months cross sectional study was conducted at Changi General Hospital (CGH). English-speaking patients over 21 years old admitted for self-harm behavior were recruited into our study after being referred to our consultation liaison team. The ICD-10 (WHO 1993) was used for psychiatric diagnoses, and the International Personality Disorders Examination (IPDE) ICD-10 version screening questionnaire and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) 21 were administered. STATA version 10.1 was used for statistical analyses.

Results: Of all patients referred, forty patients were eligible and 37 of them consented to participate in the study. All participants were screened positive for at least one class of maladaptive personality traits, with the majority (89.19%) being screened positive for more than 1 class of maladaptive traits. The three most prevalent classes of maladaptive traits were anankastic (75.68%), schizoid (67.57%) and paranoid (62.16%). More than three quarters (78.38%) of the participants had 3 or more classes of maladaptive traits.

Conclusions: Maladaptive personality traits are common and inherent in self-harm patients, with majority of them exhibiting anankastic, schizoid and paranoid traits in this study. Understanding the nature of maladaptive traits in self-harm patients can help us in tailoring future interventions towards such self-harm behavior to bring about improvements in psychiatric care, reduction of self-harm frequency and reduce health care cost.